

CARTOGRAPHICAL CLUES TO THREE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY SHIPWRECKS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN*

Recent place-name studies dealt with two variant, migratory inscriptions, the island of *los romeros*, actually Amsterdam Island in the southern Indian Ocean, and *Psitacorum regio* ('The Region of Parrots'), on a fictitious part of Gerard Mercator's southern continent; Abraham Ortelius' 1570 version of Mercator's invention is shown on Figure 1.¹ It is the purpose of this article to examine the background behind three shipwrecks in the Indian Ocean which have been recorded on maps and charts; all three wrecks are connected in one way or another with the above two inscriptions.

The first wreck is both correctly sited and well documented. Several sixteenth-century Portuguese charts of the Indian Ocean and others copied from them, such as one published in Jan Huyghen van Linschoten's *Itinerario* in the mid-1590s, record the wreck of the *São Paulo*, about halfway down the southwest coast of Sumatra, approximately on the Equator. One of the first cartographers to portray it was Fernão Vaz Dourado; on one of his charts of 1570, for example, there appears the inscription *aqui se perdeu / sam paulo* ('here the São Paulo was lost') (Figure 2).² A series of other inscriptions traces the progress of the survivors southeastwards along the Sumatran coastline until they managed to reach the safety of their compatriots in Bantam (Banten) in Java and eventually Malacca.

In the southern Indian Ocean another chart in the same atlas shows an island in latitude 38°S, against which is the inscription *aq̃ achou saõ paulo* (lit. 'here found São Paulo') (Figure 3).³ These two inscriptions refer to the same ship, and several accounts of its voyage have come down to us.⁴ The long one by Henrique Dias, one of the survivors of the wreck, gives quite enough details about the island that was 'discovered' on 15th December 1560, in what he records as 37 3/4°S, to make clear that the island concerned was the one now known as Amsterdam, which is actually in latitude 37°52'S. It had, in fact, been discovered nearly four decades earlier, on 18th March 1522, by the Spanish ship *Victoria*, the only surviving vessel of Magellan's fleet that had set out from Spain in 1519. Although a brief description of it was given in the log of the pilot, Francisco Albo, and recorded as being 38°S, no name is there recorded as having been given to it.⁵ However, it was undoubtedly named *los romeros* ('the pilot fish'), presumably because of their abundance in the vicinity, and not 'the pilgrims', another potential meaning of the name. The island was so named, and correctly sited, latitudinally at least, by Diogo Ribeiro, a Portuguese cartographer working in the *Casa de Contratación* in Seville, on his copies of the Spanish master world chart, the *padrón real*.⁶ However, owing to a careless copying error, possibly by the Portuguese cartographer Gaspar Viegas in the 1530s, it got positioned on Portuguese charts 10° further north, in 28°S,⁷ as can be seen in Figure 3. It was usually shown on maps and charts with the Portuguese form of the name, *y: dos romeiros*, often with the addition of the words *dos castelhanos* ('of the Spaniards') or, as on Figure 3, as *romeiros castelhanos*. Since the island was a long way off the normal Portuguese routes between the Cape of Good Hope and India, both in its real and 'ghost' positions, the error was not realised for centuries. Not surprisingly, therefore, when it was 'discovered' by the *São Paulo* in 1560, it was thought to be a different island some 10° south of *los romeros*, and became known by the name of the 'discovering' ship. The later discovery by the Dutch of another

island just south of it caused much nomenclature confusion until the nineteenth century, the Dutch calling the more northerly one Amsterdam and the more southerly one St Paul, while the British applied the names the other way round; Pierre du Val's map (Figure 4) follows British usage, but the Dutch usage has prevailed in the long run.

The *São Paulo's* wreck site, as we have seen, was reasonably correctly located on Portuguese charts and some of those copied from them. Very few Iberian cartographers, at least until the turn of the century, showed any signs of the mainly fictitious southern landmass that figured, either whole, or in part, on so many maps by non-Iberian cartographers from the mid-sixteenth century until about the end of the seventeenth. Belief in its existence had interesting results in the recording of the other two wrecks to be examined.

The Dutch cartographer, Gerard Mercator, had originally invented it on his globe gores of 1541.⁸ He was one of many theoretical cartographers who were convinced by the age-old theory that a huge southern continent must of necessity exist to counterbalance the landmass in the northern hemisphere and thus keep the earth steady on its axis. In order to understand the effect of this southern landmass on the two remaining shipwrecks, and especially the last of them, it is necessary to outline in some detail how it was formed.

The discovery of the north coast of Tierra del Fuego by Magellan in 1520 had persuaded many people that it must be part of the imagined *Terra Australis Incognita*, constituting, in fact, proof of its existence. This acted as a catalyst, encouraging navigators to search for the other parts of it, and causing a number of cartographers to seek out evidence, particularly documentary evidence, that might be interpreted as providing confirmatory proof of its existence.

It so happened that several manuscript and printed editions of Marco Polo's *Travels* contained one highly significant textual error. It occurred, for example, in Latin editions included in Simon Grynaeus' compendium of travel literature, *Novus Orbis Regionum*, published in 1532.⁹ The error in question seemed to provide exactly what was wanted. For over two centuries Marco Polo had been regarded as the authority on Asia, especially the most distant parts of it. In these two editions, in a particularly vital context, two textual errors occurred. Where Marco Polo had originally stated quite correctly that *Locach*, *Malaiur* (or *Maletur*), *Petan*, *Iaua Minor* and several other Southeast Asian places were south of *Champa* (Central Vietnam), the corrupt texts stated that they were south of Java, and the name *Locach* was rendered *Boeach*.¹⁰ After generations of manuscript copying and translation, it is hardly surprising that Mercator failed to recognise any of these names, so different were they from those versions that had reached Europe from Portuguese sources. He may also be forgiven for failing to compare the Marco Polo texts he used with other editions; this resulted in his non-recognition of either of the two specific textual errors.

On the basis of this apparently authoritative, but actually defective information, and more derived from another Italian traveller, Ludovico di Varthema, Mercator invented as best he could, land and islands south of Java to accommodate Marco Polo's names, in accordance with the very sketchy details regarding their size and relative positions that were provided. In addition, the real places concerned, with the Portuguese-derived versions of their names, were also included on Mercator's map, approximately in their correct positions, according to information he had got from Portuguese sources.

In order to complete the 'necessary' southern continent, Mercator joined up his landmass of *Beach* (which was how he rendered *Boeach* (*Locach*)), south of Java, both eastwards and westwards to the north coast of Tierra del Fuego. He could find no evidence to substantiate the existence of his coastline across the South Pacific, to the south of the

route believed to have been followed by Magellan, but he did find two items which seemed to justify that bit of coast that stretched across the southern Indian and Atlantic Oceans. The only relevant one here is *Psitacorum regio* ('Region of Parrots'). This inscription, in a variety of guises, had originally been applied to Brazil by a number of non-Iberian cartographers. However, through an intriguing series of false positionings of inscriptions relating to Brazil and the associated 'Land of Parrots', together with false deductions based on them by Johannes Schöner (1515), Oronce Finé (1531), an anonymous cartographer of ca 1535, and Mercator himself, the *Psitacorum regio* inscription landed up on a stretch of non-existent coastline somewhere south of Africa.¹¹

Strictly speaking, a chart is a map designed for navigators, and is therefore primarily concerned with coastlines, landmarks, shoals, etc., paying scant attention to inland areas. Charts produced by Spanish and Portuguese cartographers in the sixteenth century, of course, bore little resemblance to the very accurate, large-scale charts we associate with the term today. Mercator's famous 1569 map, the first one composed on what is now known as Mercator's projection, was, in fact, at least partially designed as an aid to navigation, as its title implies: *NOVA ET AVCTA ORBIS TERRAE DESCRIPTIO AD VSVM NA / vlgantium emendate et accommodata* ('New and more complete representation of the terrestrial globe approximately amended and adapted for navigational use').¹² However, as we have seen, Mercator, like many of his non-Iberian contemporaries, was quite prepared to give graphic form, not merely to those parts of the world that were fairly well known, but also to little-known parts. He gathered material from a vast number of different sources, including Marco Polo and Ptolemy, and then endeavoured to reconcile this often vague, incorrect and contradictory information with quite reliable information from navigational sources.

With that background information we can now examine the other two wreck-associated inscriptions. The first is on a world map by the seventeenth-century French cartographer, Pierre du Val. Like several seventeenth-century French cartographers, he was not particularly discriminating in his gathering of material for insertion on his maps. As can be seen on his map of 1674, he had had to allow some gaps to appear in his representation of Mercator's southern continent (Figure 4).¹³ He could no longer portray the north coast of Tierra del Fuego as part of the southern continent after Willem Cornelis van Schouten and Jacob Le Maire had sailed between Cape Horn and Staten Island (*Isla de los Estados*) in 1616, and *Staten Landt* had to become *Staten Eylandt* after other Dutch ships had sailed round it in 1643, as evidenced by the inscription *Passage de Brouwers*. Similarly, Dutch exploration along the north, west and south coasts of Australia from 1606 onwards, and Tasman's discovery of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) and the west coast of New Zealand in 1642, caused another great gap to appear in *Terra Australis*. Du Val shifted the Marco Polo/Mercator inscriptions far to the west and incorporated them with the 'Land of Parrots'. Thus below southern Africa we have the inscription *Terre des Perroquets, ou quelques vns placent les Royaumes de Psitac, Beach, Lucac et Maletur* ('Land of Parrots, where some place the Kingdoms of Psitac, Beach, Lucac and Maletur'). From this inscription, it seems as though Du Val may not even have realised that *Terre des Perroquets* was a French translation of the abridged Latin inscription, *Psitac*, for Mercator's *Psitacorum regio*.

Elsewhere, in the South Pacific, apparent evidence for the southern continent is shown by the words *Terre de Quir* ('Land of Queiros'). This was due to the exaggerated claims made by Pedro Fernandes de Queirós, who in 1606 had discovered what he called *Austrialia del Espíritu Santo* and was later known as the New Hebrides, and is now Vanuatu.¹⁴

On some of his other maps, Du Val revived references to that very vaguely known discovery by Binot Paulmier de Gonneville in 1504, which the latter called *les Indes meridionales* ('The South Indies'). Since the real identity of Gonneville's discovery could not be deduced from the surviving scanty details, writers have managed to equate it with Australia, Madagascar or Brazil, the latter being almost certainly correct. Du Val, however, presumably because of the mention in the account of the Cape of Good Hope, decided it must have been Mercator's southern continent in the vicinity of *Psitacorum regio*. This can be seen on a map of 1679,¹⁵ for example, in the inscription *TERRE DES PERROQUETS / ou l'an 1504 aborda le nommé Gonneville / qui en ramena en Normandie / Essonier fils du Roy Arosca* ('Land of Parrots, where in the year 1504 there landed the said Gonneville, who carried off to Normandy Essonier, son of King Arosca').

From the above it is clear that Du Val's standard of proof was not too demanding and one may agree with Charles de Brosses who refers to him and to Jean Baptiste Nolin as being '*géographes d'une habileté [sic] fort médiocre*' ('geographers of very mediocre ability').

To return to Du Val's 1674 map, one can see the islands of S. Paul and Amsterdam, some 38°S in the southern Indian Ocean; on modern maps the names are reversed.¹⁶ Northwest of them is the misplaced *Romeiros / Castellanos* ('Spanish Romeros') in 28°S, to which has been added *al. I. de Pines* ('otherwise known as Isle of Pines'). As this addition did not figure on maps by any other cartographer, it seemed to me that an attempt to trace his source might be of interest. French cartographers had a tendency to translate those foreign place-names whose meanings they knew or thought they knew; Avuray de Garel, for example, translated *Romeyros*, incorrectly as it so happens, as *Pelerin* ('Pilgrims').¹⁷ Du Val's *Pines* could have been a misrendering of the Spanish *pinos* ('pine trees'), though the Spanish description of *los romeros* clearly stated there were no trees on it;¹⁸ the same objection would apply to the English word 'pines', and in both cases one would have expected a Frenchman to translate the name as *I. de Pins*.

The map's date provided a clue as to where a solution might be found. In 1668, an Englishman, Henry Neville, published an account of a Dutch voyage the previous year. The very brief narrative was entitled *The Isle of Pines, or a late Discovery of a fourth Island near Terra Australis Incognita by Henry Cornelius van Sloetten*.¹⁹ No clear indication was given of the island's position, though it seemed to be somewhere east of Madagascar; as this was approximately where the false *los romeros* was located, Pierre du Val presumed that they were one and the same island, even though no such assumption could legitimately be drawn from the text. The Dutch found on it the astonishingly numerous descendants of the five survivors of an English ship said to have been wrecked there in 1589 or 1590; the island's name was derived from that of the sole male survivor, one George Pine. Henry Neville's account of the Dutch discovery was remarkably popular, being several times reprinted, and translated into several languages; the Dutch version, entitled *Ontdeckinge van't / EYLANDT / VAN / PINES* ('Discovery of the Isle of Pines'), actually had a chart of part of the island, including soundings, on the title page. The French edition declares it to be a *Recit véritable*, in translating the English version's 'A True Relation'. This claim to be a truthful account, and its remarkable popularity, might have roused the suspicions of a perceptive cartographer, but, as we have seen in the case of some of his other inscriptions, Pierre du Val was far from perceptive. The whole story was a complete fabrication, being one of those very popular works of travel fiction which proliferated during the seventeenth century.²⁰ Even five years later, in 1679, the *I. de Pines* inscription still figures on one of Du Val's maps.²¹

The above should act as a salutary warning to historians, and not least to historians of cartography, who too readily accept writers' statements at face value. Those specifically stated to be true should be regarded with particular suspicion. Those who have relied on Jean Alfonse's *Les voyages auantureux* in an endeavour to substantiate claims of a Portuguese discovery of Australia should have paid attention to the penultimate paragraph in that book: '*Lon ne doit point s'esmerueiller de tous ces discours, car il est escrit cōme ie l'ay veu et fait les voyages, ceux qui les ont faitz ou leu par liures, sçauent s'il est vray*' ('One should not be surprised by all these accounts, for it is written as I have seen it and carried out these voyages; those who have participated in them, or read about them in books, know if it is true').²² In his *La cosmographie*, Jean Alfonse wrote: '*Je ne dictz icy chose que je n'aye expérimenté ... Nul n'en doit doubter. Car j'ai navigué jusques à présent par toutes les mers quarante et huyt ans ...*' ('I say nothing here that I have not [personally] experienced ... No one should doubt that. For I have so far sailed in all the seas for forty eight years').²³

As much of the content of both his books can easily be shown to have been plagiarised, especially from Martín Fernández de Enciso's *Suma de geographia* (1519), such protestations of authenticity are obvious indications that any such material should be treated with healthy scepticism. A perceptive French writer, Marc Lescarbot, wrote in 1609 concerning Alfonse: '*Et peut-il bien appeler ses voyages aventureux, non pour lui, qui jamais fut en la centième partie des lieux qu'il décrit (au moins il est aisé à le conjecturer), mais pour ceux qui voudront suivre les routes qu'il ordonna de suivre aux mariniers*' ('an well may he call his voyages adventurous, not for himself, who never was in a hundredth part of the places which he describes (at least it is easy to surmise that), but for those who may wish to follow the routes he recommends mariners to follow').²⁴

Jumping to conclusions on the basis of insufficient or defective information, or superficial reasoning, as, for example, in the case of Du Val's *I. de Pines*, is a very human failing. So also is the tendency of some crusading advocates of a particular theory to clutch at the most insubstantial of straws, if they can somehow be construed as providing confirmatory evidence of fervently-held, preconceived ideas, such as Mercator's belief in the southern continent and that of several writers who maintain that the Dieppe maps constitute proof of a Portuguese discovery of Australia in the 1520s.²⁵ Some will even go so far as to manufacture 'evidence', or disregard or suppress information that runs counter to their beliefs. Some do not merely mislead others; they delude themselves.

Because of Columbus' conviction that he had reached Asia, not only did the inhabitants of America get referred to as Indians, but some early maps show Asian place-names on the American mainland and on Cuba. Other maps recorded American place-names on the coast of Asia.²⁶ Pedro Fernandes de Queirós' beliefs enabled him to persuade himself and many others that the land he discovered in 1606 and named *Australia del Espíritu Santo* was a northerly projection of that 'fourth part of the world', *Terra Australis*, when, in fact, it was Vanuatu. His self-deception moved him to bombard Philip III of Spain with *memoriales*, colourful and highly exaggerated accounts of his discovery, in an attempt to persuade the king to provide him with finance to settle and develop it, for the glory of God, the Spanish Crown and, of course, himself.²⁷ His failure to obtain support was not due to any lack of convincing propaganda, but rather to Spain's economic state, and its inability to adequately maintain and defend the vast empire it had already acquired.

Just about the time Dutch discoveries were beginning to make holes in Mercator's southern continent, two Portuguese cartographers succumbed to the temptation to portray it, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries; this was presumably

under the influence of its appearance on so many maps by reputable non-Iberian cartographers.

Manuel Godinho de Erédia produced several variant versions of it. Son of a Portuguese father and a Macassarese mother, he was born in Malacca in 1563 and died about 1623.²⁸ After a Jesuit education in Malacca and Goa, he became a surveyor and cartographer. He acquired a well-deserved reputation for his maps of the Malay peninsula made in the early seventeenth century, which have been declared better than those made of it by any other cartographer for nearly two centuries. He could also produce a good general map of Asia for the period. However, he was an avid reader of classical authorities, as well as of Ptolemy, the Bible and Marco Polo, and evidently was very familiar with maps by Mercator and Gastaldi. In addition, he listened to stories of voyages, mainly by Indonesians, in the area south of Java, Sumbawa and Timor. His attempts to reconcile such disparate material led him to conceive an incredibly confused and varying idea of what lands and islands lay in that vicinity. His English translator, J.V. Mills, not unreasonably described one of the maps he produced of that area as 'a cartographic' nightmare'. Erédia also acquired a burning ambition to become the great discoverer of the region, even before he came under the influence of the publicity put out by his contemporary compatriot, Pedro Fernandes de Queirós. Malay revolts against the Portuguese in Malacca, and the threat posed by the arrival of the Dutch in SE Asian waters around the turn of the century, caused him to be called upon to help with defence measures just as his projected voyage of discovery was about to set off. His appointment to become the *descobridor* of the area south of Indonesia came about as a result of representations he made to the Spanish Crown, but Erédia's best known surviving written equivalents of Queirós' *memoriales* date from several years after his projected voyage failed to set off.²⁹ The two works concerned are the *Declaracam de Malaca e India Meridional com o Cathay* (1613)³⁰ and the *Tratado Ophirico* (1616);³¹ neither was published until the nineteenth century and both are superb examples of how wishful thinking affected the elaboration of some early maps.

Two of Erédia's world maps are relevant to the third wreck under discussion. The outline of the southern continent on the first of these two maps (Figure 5),³² which must date from 1609 or later, is obviously based on that of Mercator. It includes the misspelled *PITACORVM REGIO* inscription south of Africa and the large, northward-thrusting promontory culminating in *bea/ch*. The latter also bears the inscription *maleatur* and *lucac*, while offshore to the east are the islands of *petaõ* and *yaua minor*. The *bea/ch* promontory also bears another name, *LVSANTARA*, which Erédia bestowed on it on the misunderstood authority of Indonesian informants; it does not derive, like the others, from Marco Polo, as one writer has stated. On one map, Erédia applies the name to part of an island, along with the names *beach* and *IAVA MAIOR*, despite the fact that on his other maps he followed the normal practice of all Portuguese who used the latter name and applied it to what we know as Java.³³ On another map he gives *LVCA.ANTARA* as an alternative name for *IAVA.MINOR*, while Java itself is named *IAVA.MAIOR*.³⁴

The two long inscriptions on the Figure 5 map south of Africa and south of South America merely refer to Vasco da Gama's rounding of the Cape of Good Hope in 1498 and Magellan's passage through the strait that bears his name in 1520. The long inscription at the western end of the southern 'continent' is evidence of Erédia's having heard of Queirós' discovery of *Australia del Espíritu Santo* (Vanuatu); the name of the island is given as *noua gerusalem* ('New Jerusalem'), actually the name given to the settlement on what is still called Espírito Santo Island; the date of the discovery should read 1606.

The long inscription at the eastern end of the 'continent' is of particular interest, as it reads: *MANUEL GODINHO / DE EREDIA foy / prouido p.^a descobrir / esta noua yndia meridional por / o Vizorey ares / de saldanha / ano 1600* ('Manuel Godinho de Erédia was ordered to discover this new southern India by the Viceroy Aires de Saldanha in the year 1600'). The name India or Indies, of course, was bestowed very liberally on many newly discovered parts of the world. Erédia claims he got the name *India Meridional* from Ptolemy, but I have been unable to find it on any of Ptolemy's maps that I have seen. It certainly did appear as *India Meridional(is)* on several very early sixteenth-century maps, but it is always placed in what we would call SE Asia, and is nearly always north of the Equator; the same maps show *India Superior* north of China.³⁵ Gonneville, as we have seen, applied a plural version of the name, *les Indes meridionales*, to his discovery, almost certainly Brazil. It is always a temptation for the modern reader to assume that a place-name today automatically indicated exactly the same area in earlier centuries.

The basic outline of the southern landmass on the world map in Erédia's *Declaracam de Malaca* of 1513 (Figure 6),³⁶ is still primarily that of Mercator, but it shows two significant alterations to that shown in the previous map. One is the shape of the promontory south of Java; the other is the large gap in the coastline southwest of South America, and the group of small islands in the vicinity of where Tierra del Fuego is. These latter features, together with a brief comment in the *Tratado Ophirico*,³⁷ suggest that Erédia had heard rumours of Schouten and Le Maire's passage, in 1606, through the strait that separates Tierra del Fuego from Staten Island (*Isla de los Estados*). Until the eastern end of Staten Island had been rounded, a number of believers in the southern continent portrayed the island as part of it, as Erédia here appears to do.

As for the four inscriptions, the most westerly one records Queirós' discovery with the words *CASTELHANOS descobriraõ. ano. 1609* ('Discovered by the Spaniards in the year 1609'), still with the wrong date. Its positioning could possibly imply acceptance of Queirós' claim to have discovered part of the southern continent, for what on the previous map was clearly shown as, and stated to be an island, is here shown somewhat ambiguously with no southern coastline.

The name *lucaantara* is the only one left actually on the promontory south of Java, while *INDIA MERIDIONAL / descoberta. anno. 1601* ('Southern India, discovered in the year 1601') proclaims that the previous year's order to discover it had been carried out. But what was it? It actually refers to a voyage to an unidentifiable island which Erédia claims was made by a servant of his, on his orders.³⁸

It is, however, the remaining mysterious inscription, *PORTVGVEZES / com Artelharia. ano. 1606* ('Portuguese with Artillery in the year 1606') that concerns us here. If one were to take this inscription and its positioning at face value, one might suppose that it was evidence of a Portuguese landing on some island in the southern Indian Ocean, perhaps Amsterdam Island (*los romeros*) or St Paul, immediately south of it, since there is certainly no vast mainland even remotely near the position indicated. However, no one who is acquainted with those two islands is likely to believe it feasible to have landed artillery on either of them in 1606, even if there had been good reason to do so.

In order to trace the origin of this inscription, one must bear in mind that Erédia was a fervent believer in Mercator's southern continent; moreover, he was trying to provide sufficient evidence of its real existence to persuade the Spanish Crown to back an expedition led by himself to claim it.

How the inscription got there can be worked out from two confused, disorderly, stylistically chaotic passages in the *Tratado Ophirico* and the *Declaracam de Malaca*. My complete, fairly literal translations of these are given below, followed by some

elucidatory comments. The folio numbers of the original manuscripts are provided for the benefit of anyone who would like to check on the original Portuguese.

The longer and more detailed passage, from the *Tratado Ophirico*, reads as follows:

[folio 59v] 'Rui de melo de Sampaio, captain of the ship S. Paulo, by chance discovered the southern land called Region of Parrots or *Regio Pithacoru* which lies in latitude 48°S, on the meridian of the Island of S.L.^{co} [São Lourenço, i.e. Madagascar], and although the sailors said that it was a very fresh [luxuriant?], large island, nevertheless it is to be presumed that it is the mainland that [folio 60r] extends from Lucach.

'The flagship of Cornelio Malodiva called at this land when separated by currents from the rest of the fleet en route from Holland to Malacca. The corsairs wanted to land for water and firewood, [so] came ashore in their ship's boat, meeting no resistance, but were on the contrary, well received. The people of this region are white, looking like Portuguese; they are poorly clothed, wearing shirts woven from 'brua' fibres, and their only arms are throwing darts and bows and arrows; they enjoy every kind of food; and they have Portuguese words; in the largest village they saw a lot of bronze artillery with the Royal Arms of Portugal; and the corsairs were astonished at what they saw and returned to the flagship with all they needed and continued their voyage to the port of Malacca in the year 1606.

'These Portuguese are the descendants of Francisco de Albuquerque and P.^o [Pe(d)ro] Vaz da Veiga and other Portuguese from those two ships which disappeared somewhere beyond the Cape of Good Hope in 1503. And as it was thought that they might have reached land in that region, the king, Dom Manuel, ordered these captains to be searched for by Cyde Barbosa and P.^o Coresma in two ships; and they could find no trace of these people along the coast of Good Hope or on the coast of S. Lourenço in the year 1506.

'And on the ship S. Paulo, which ran aground on the coast of Sumatra were found some notes [made] by the pilot to the effect that that country was a great island like New Guinea, and that along its south coast there was a large bay and trading ports from which large sailing ships passed to the country of Lucach; and all that bay [was] inhabited by white people, and the other white people like Portuguese lived on the northern promontory where was that Metal Artillery with the Arms [folio 60v] of Portugal, so that this southern land, the *Regio Pithacoru*, was discovered by Rui de Mello de Sampaio in the year 1560.'

The relevant passage from the *Declaracam de Malaca* reads:

[folio 54v] 'and the pilot of the ship S. Paulo which was wrecked on [the coast of] Sumatra, in a storm that was experienced at [folio 55r] *los Romeros* in 36°S latitude, ran to the east for many days, until, further south, he reached the Isle of Wax, [so called] because of the many lumps of wax that they found on the shore marked with different Arabic inscriptions. And this wax was waiting to be loaded on some ship which rapidly departed for another part of the inhabited island; that wax cannot have been from shipwrecks, because it would have melted and become misshapen on account of the heat of the sun. Rather it would

seem that the wax is a commercial commodity belonging to some enterprising merchants from some mainland to the south.

'And another Portuguese ship, in latitude 40°S discovered the Land of Parrots in a storm, and running along the coast they found many parrots on the shore; and that land seems to be a continental mainland, and the same as Lucach.

'The Dutch ship, in a storm in latitude 41°S, discovered that southern mainland, where it found many Portuguese, the children and grandchildren of others who were shipwrecked on the coast, and they have the same arms and artillery in their possession, but are naked and poorly clad, and live by tilling the soil and by working, in the year 1606.³⁹

Such is the nature of the contents, and style, or lack of it, of these two passages, that they might well be read again before reading the comments that follow.

All the accounts of the voyage of the *São Paulo* agree that the captain's name was Ruy de Mello da Camera (or Camara), not Ruy de Melo de Sampaio. What the *São Paulo* actually 'discovered' was not, of course, a non-existent southern continent, but the island of Amsterdam (*los romeros*). Erédia clearly chose to ignore the *São Paulo*'s crew's description of their 'discovery' as an island because he wished to believe that it was part of Mercator's southern continent; the 48°S latitude figure he presumably deduced from the latitude of the fictitious *Psitacorum regio* south of Madagascar on whatever map it was that he was consulting.

Cornelio Malodiva is almost certainly a Portuguese rendering of the name of a famous Dutch sea captain of the time, Cornelis Matelief. I had hoped that the name and the date 1606 might enable the actual location of the reported encounter with the descendants of Portuguese wreck survivors to be established. However, the standard Dutch work describing early Dutch voyages in the region only records Matelief as having made one stop between the Cape of Good Hope and Malacca that year, and that was a very brief one at Mauritius; no mention is made of wreck survivors.⁴⁰ The word 'corsairs' reflects the attitude of the Portuguese towards Dutch incursions into what they considered their preserve in much the same way as the Spaniards referred to Sir Francis Drake as *el pirata Draque*.

The name Francisco de Albuquerque and the date 1503 enable one to identify approximately the real location of the wreck(s). According to the historian Gaspar Correia's account, Albuquerque's ship, returning to Portugal from Dely on the west coast of India, seems to have been lost in 1503 somewhere along the east coast of Madagascar, south of the *Ilheos de Sancta Maria*.⁴¹ Correia also mentions the departure from Lisbon in mid-1505 of ships bound for Quiloa (Kilwa, in what is now Tanzania), under the command of Pero Quaresma and Cide Barbudo, obviously Erédia's P.^o Coresma and Cyde Barbosa; he does not, however, make any mention of their having been given orders to search for survivors of Albuquerque's wreck.⁴²

Erédia's final sentence in the *Tratado Ophirico* passage is not merely very long, it is incredibly muddled. He seems to have confused a description of Sumatra's southwest coast, reputedly by the pilot of the *São Paulo*, with a Dutch description of the discovery of the descendants of Portuguese wreck survivors. Moreover, by sheer wishful thinking, he presumes them to have been found on what we know is a stretch of continental coastline which, even though it appeared on many maps of the period, does not exist.

The English translator, who was relying partially on a French translation of the Portuguese original, made an interesting error. He was unaware of the meaning of the word *Romeiros* and of the island the name was attached to, and so seized upon the word

remeiro ('rower'), rendering the first part of the sentence as 'the pilot of the ship *S. Paulo* lost his course off Sumatra in a storm which took the rowers to 36 degrees south! None of the surviving accounts of the *São Paulo*'s voyage mentions any landing on any island between the one they 'discovered' and the shipwreck off Sumatra. Only one even mentions their having sighted an island. Consequently the whole passage about the discovery of lumps of wax is either fictitious, or was transferred by Erédia from some other vessel's report. The 'wax' must have been ambergris.⁴³ The presumption that the 'wax' belonged to some 'enterprising merchants from some mainland to the south' is clearly wishful thinking.

The reported discovery of the 'Land of Parrots' by 'another Portuguese ship', in the *Declaração de Malaca* passage, contradicts the *Tratado Ophirico* statement that it was discovered by the *São Paulo*. This description, including the 40°S latitude, is Erédia's interpretation of the long *Psitacorum regio* inscription on Mercator's southern continent on his 1569 map, and its positioning. In English it reads: 'Region of Parrots, so called by the Portuguese, carried along by the southwest wind on their way to Calicut on account of the unheard-of size of those birds there. As they had followed the coast for 2,000 miles without finding the end of it, there is no doubt that they had reached the Southern Continent'. This inscription can be traced back to a letter written in 1501 by an Italian diplomat, recounting Pedro Alvares Cabral's voyage to India and back in 1500-1501; the letter was somehow misunderstood, and the part describing the discovery of Brazil was eventually taken as applying to a landmass south of Africa.⁴⁴ Ortelius' abridged version of Mercator's inscription can be seen on Figure 1.

So confused are both the passages which account for the *PORTVGVEZES / com Artelharia. ano 1606* inscription that one may well wonder whether, like Du Val's account of the descendants of shipwreck survivors, it is fictitious. However, some of the details ring true, especially the names of the missing ships' captains and those of the captains of the ships said to have been sent to look for them, for they are confirmed by Gaspar Correia's *Lendas da Índia*. Furthermore, two historical documents contained in the so-called *Livro dos Monções*, a collection of reports and official correspondence, seem potentially relevant.

A letter dated 27th February 1613, from Philip III to the then viceroy of India, Jeronimo de Azevedo, refers to a letter of his some two years earlier, in which he had ordered a search to be made for 'the white descendants of Portuguese who are understood to be on the island of Madagascar'; he requests a report on the results of this order.⁴⁵

In a letter dated 20th February 1616, the viceroy reported to Philip as follows: 'Being on the island of Madagascar, on its outer [i.e. east] coast, some 25°S, I found a king, a non-practising Muslim ... who is married to women who are descendants of our Portuguese who were shipwrecked there ... our people made there a kind of fortress, with another stone *padrão* [commemorative monument] with the royal arms and a stone cross ... and our people lived in this land, marrying the local inhabitants and left many descendants'.⁴⁶ So far there seems no means of knowing for sure whether these descendants are the same as those mentioned by Erédia, but it certainly seems possible.

This survey of three shipwrecks makes abundantly clear that except where extensive, corroborative, documentary evidence is available, as in the case of the *São Paulo*, cartographic references implying shipwrecks, and especially their reported positions, should be treated with extreme caution. Many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century cartographers were not overly critical in their acceptance and recording of 'facts'. This is readily understandable, for reliable confirmation or denial of reports was probably very frequently impossible to come by. Many reports undoubtedly contradicted one another. All the more reason why historians, and historians of cartography in particular,

should be especially meticulous in their examination of apparent evidence. Even if the original information was correct, it may well have been seriously corrupted in transmission, whether by word of mouth, or in written form, and particularly in manuscript. As we have seen, what 'evidence' Erédia produced was astonishingly muddled and self-contradictory and, moreover, always interpreted in such a way as to confirm his preconceived ideas.

So unwieldy were the vast joint empires of Spain and Portugal under Philip III, and so precarious their economic state in the early seventeenth century, it is hardly surprising that the appeals of both Queirós and Erédia for financial and material support to further expand imperial domains fell upon deaf ears. While Queirós actually had found something, though not what he claimed, Erédia found nothing. Critical examination of his 'evidence' can hardly have inspired confidence. It is ironical that, had his fanciful reports and maps been taken at their face value, finance might have been made available, and he might have reached Australia, just before or just after the Dutch did in 1606.

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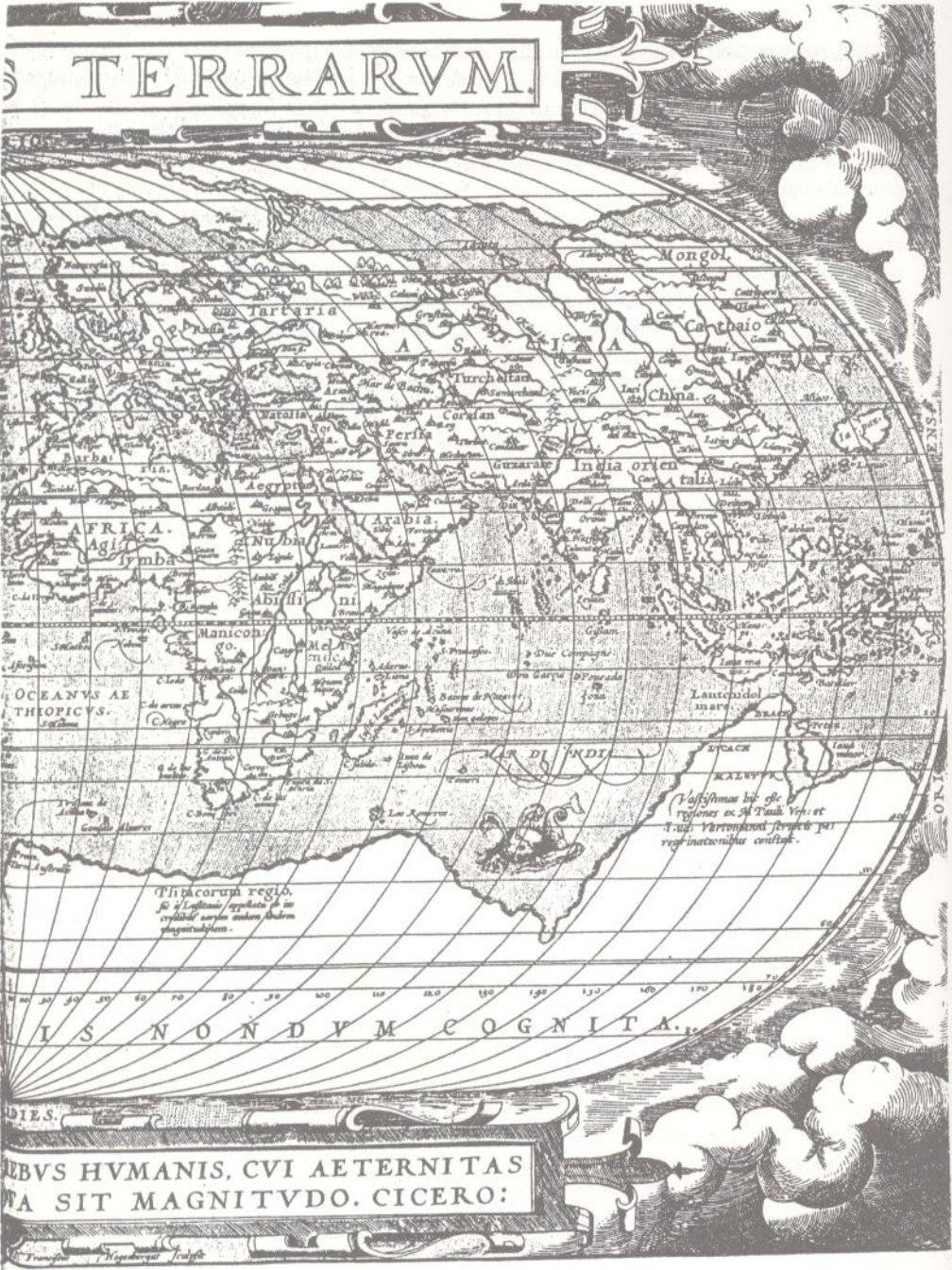


FIGURE 1: Part of Abraham Ortelius' version of Gerard Mercator's southern continent. Note the northerly projecting landmass of *BEACH, LVCAH* and *MALETVR* south of Java, with the islands of *Petan* and *Iaua / minor* east of it. All those inscriptions are derived from a faulty Marco Polo text. South of Africa is the *Psitacorum regio* ('Land of Parrots'), an inscription transferred by a complicated series of errors from Brazil, where it was originally applied on several maps of the early sixteenth century. Just to the north of the coastline stretching from *Psitacorum regio* to *BEACH*, is the island of *Los Romeros* in 38°S and northeast of it *Pomeri*, a variant version of that name, in its false 28°S position. (Reproduced from A.E. Nordenskiöld, *Facsimile-Atlas*, Plate XLVI.)



FIGURE 2: Part of a 1570 chart by Fernão Vaz Dourado, with the inscription *aqi se perdeu / sam paulo* ('here [the] São Paulo was lost'), about halfway down the southwest of Sumatra. Several other inscriptions trace the survivors' progress southeastwards along the coast. (Reproduced from A.F.Z. Cortesão and A. Teixeira da Mota, *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica*, Vol. III, Plate 271.)

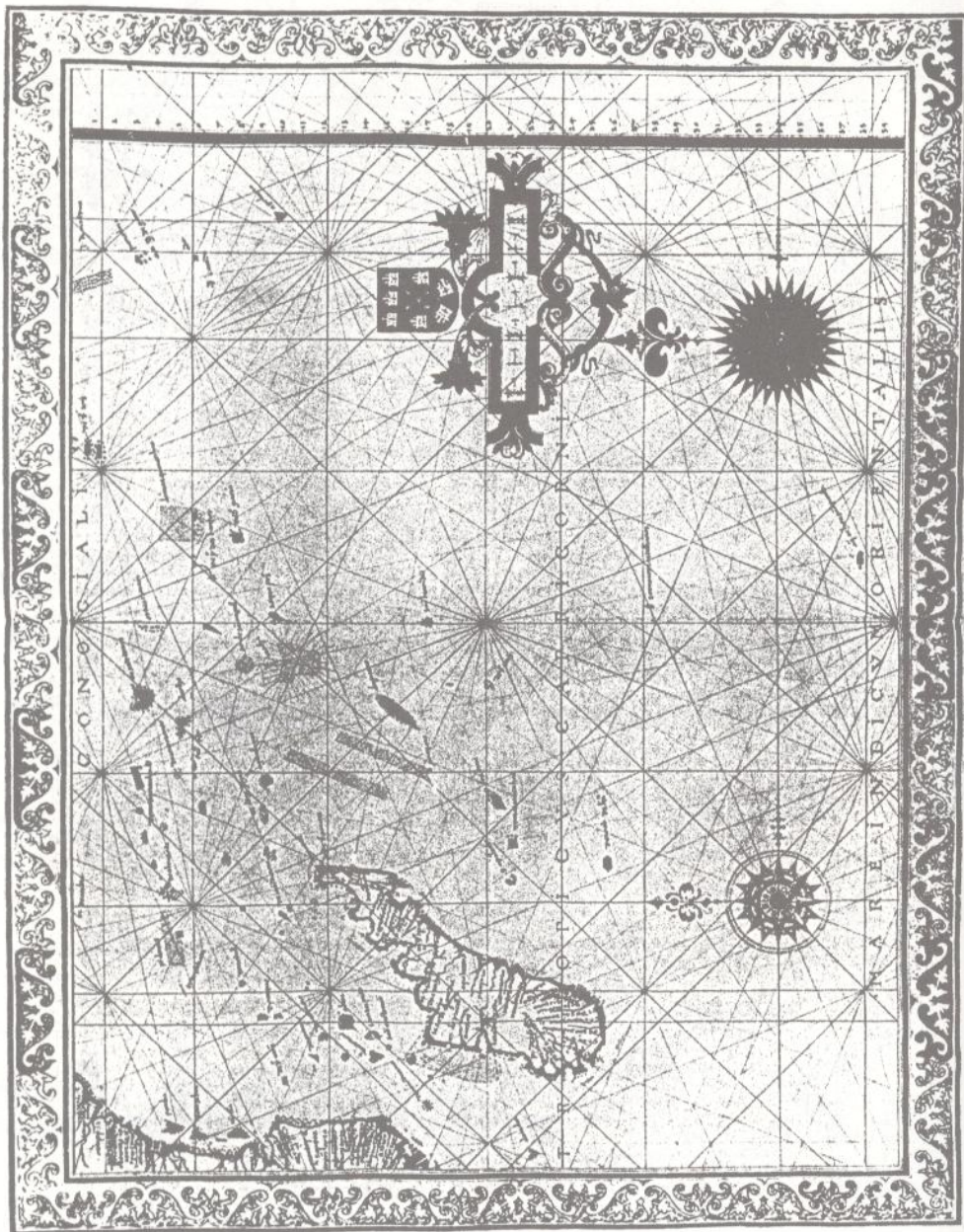


FIGURE 3: A 1570 chart of part of the Indian Ocean by Fernão Vaz Dourado. Note in 38°S the inscription *aq achou sao paulo* (lit. 'here found São Paulo'); it is actually the island originally called *los romeros* by the surviving ship of Magellan's fleet, the *Victoria*, in 1522. Owing to an early copying error, *los romeros*, here *romeiros castelhanos*, figured on Portuguese charts in 28°S, not 38°S, so when rediscovered by the *São Paulo* in 1560, it was believed to be a new discovery. (Reproduced from *PMC*, III, 268.)

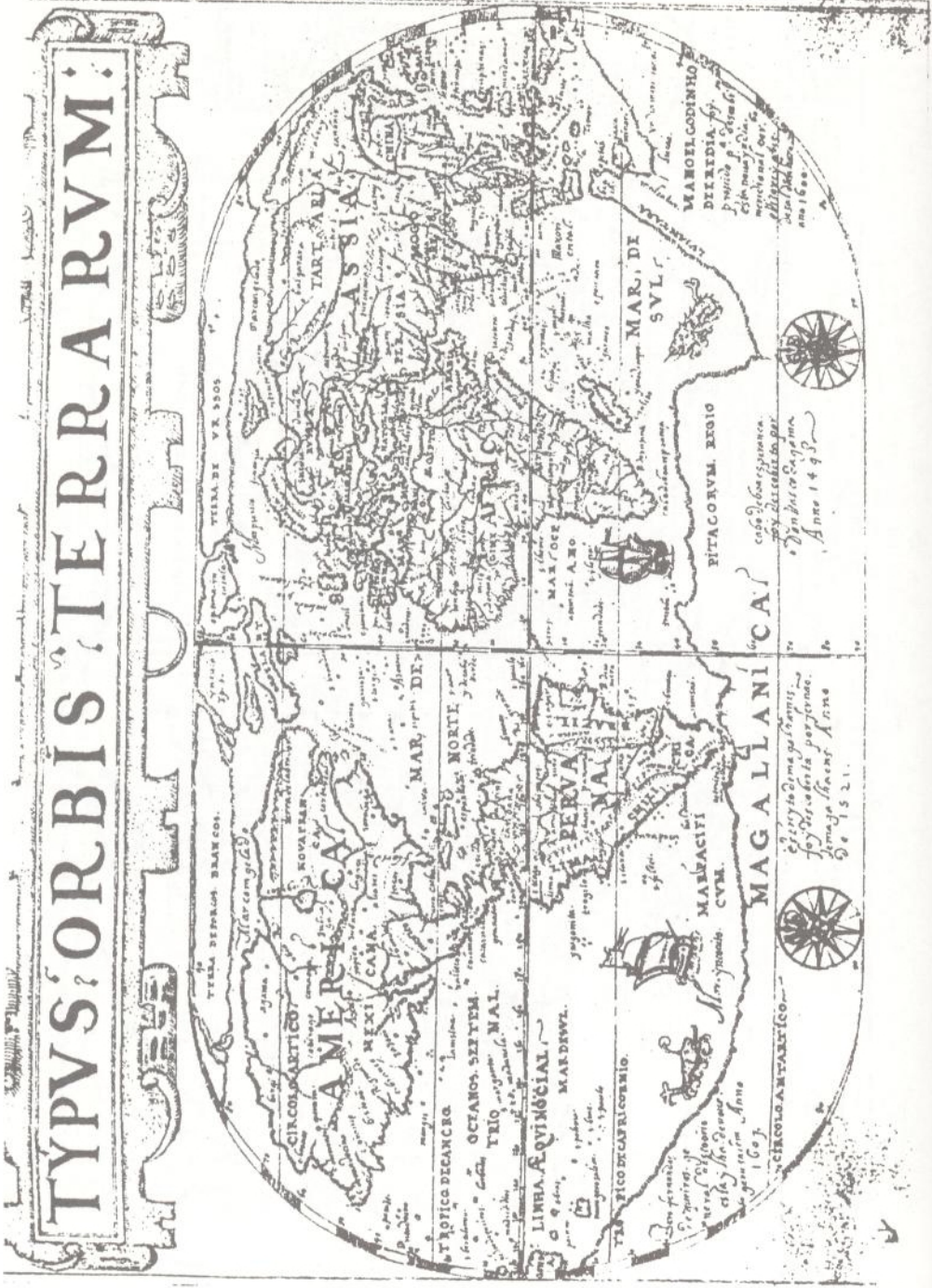


FIGURE 5: World map by Manuel Godinho de Erédia, post-1609. The Mercator landmass of beach, maleatur and lucach is still positioned south of Java with the additional inscription LVSANTARA. The 'Land of Parrots' is still south of southern Africa, identified by a misspelled version of its Latin name. (Reproduced from PMC, IV, 414A.)

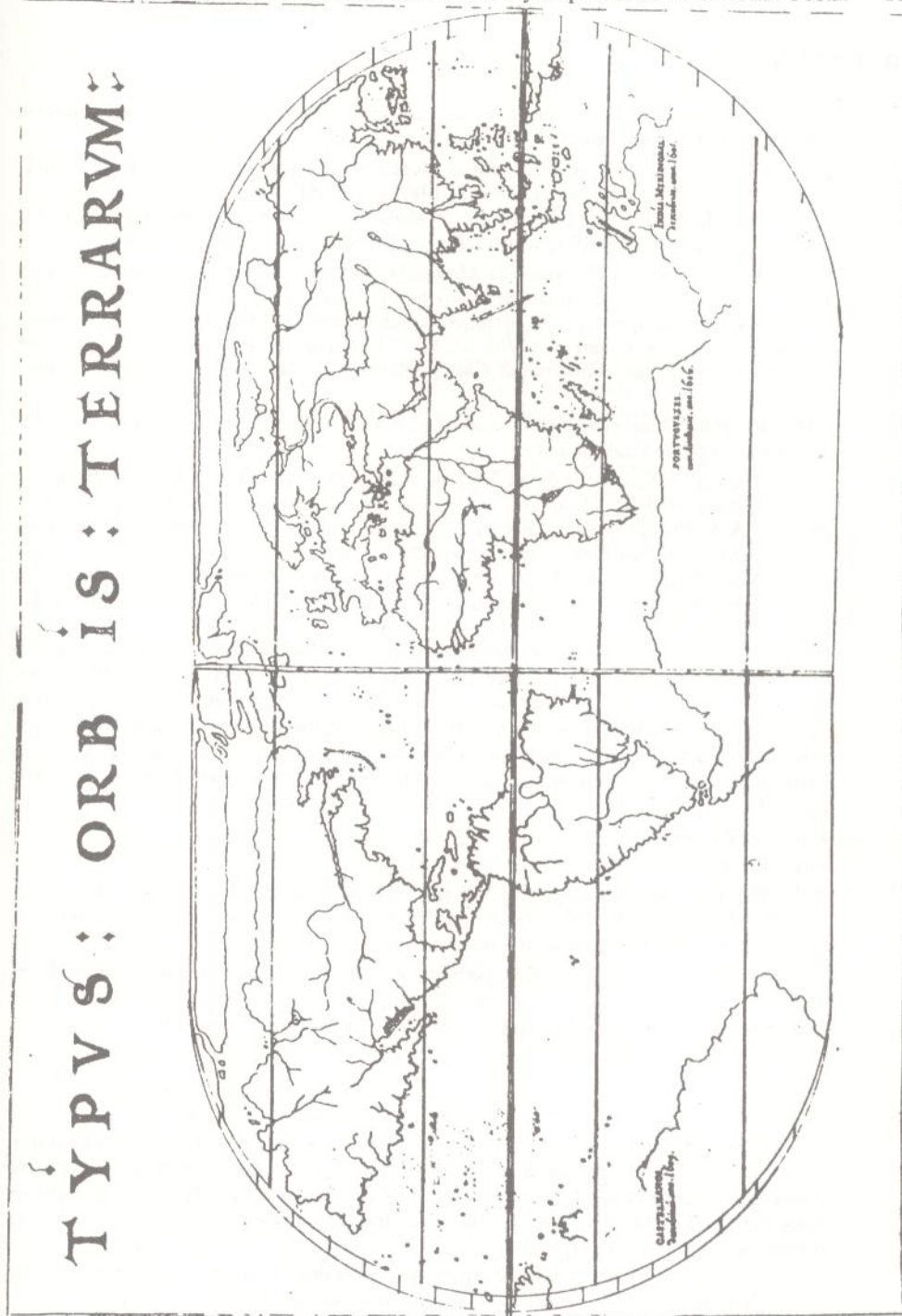


FIGURE 6: 1613 world map by Manuel Godinho de Erédia. The shape of BEACH has been much altered, and only two inscriptions appear on it, *lucaantara* and *INDIA MERIDIONAL / descoberta. anno. 1601.* Note especially south of Madagascar the inscription *PORTVGVEZES / com Artelharia. ano 1606.* (Reproduced from PMC, IV, 412A.)

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- 39 In Mills' translations the passages occur on pp. 263-4 and 67 respectively.
- 40 I am much indebted to Dr C. de Heer for having checked through *Begin ende Voortgangh van de Vereenighde Nederlantsche Geoctroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, 1646, Vol. III, on my behalf, in search of possible references.

- 41 I am much indebted to Dr C. de Heer for having checked through *Begin ende Voortgangh van de Vereenighde Nederlantsche Geoctroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, 1646, Vol. III, on my behalf, in search of possible references.
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Australian Maritime History Prize

It is with much pleasure that the Australian Association for Maritime History and the Australian National Maritime Museum announce the inaugural winners of the jointly sponsored prizes.

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The refereed journal article prize (\$300) has been awarded to Richard Morris for "Australian Stevedoring and Shipping Labour under the Transport Workers Act 1928-47", which was published in *The Great Circle*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1989.